

喬林知

Tomo Takabayashi Presents

# 今日から 魔王!?

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角川ビーンズ文庫

# Kyou Kara Maou Gaiden - Volume 03 - Special Version Mini-Novel

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# When I was lost, a kuma... ha... chi?

## When I was lost, a kuma... ha... chi?<sup>[1]</sup>[\[edit\]](#)

Note: this is a sort of continuation of the story [The Taming of the Bearbee published in Gaiden 1](#). It was published as a booklet that only comes with Gaiden 3 special version.



This took place on the day after they waved goodbye to the most popular rare animal in the country, which had hatched in the guest house of the Blood Pledge Castle.

Majesty Yuuri, the 27th Maou, had gone out on his daily training, and as usual,

the person who was with him was Lord Weller. This person hadn't realized yet that he was being called "spot-billed duck" (karugamo) behind his back. No, actually even if he realized he was being called that he wasn't going to change the way he was. But on top of that, today he wasn't wearing his uniform; instead he was wearing a jersey that his Majesty had lent him. The design with two white lines on the green fabric was ugly, and on top of that the size didn't fit him at all. The waist and thighs parts were too tight and the pants were too short. He looked exactly like a mother wearing her son's old jersey. If a maiden who liked him would have seen him at the time, he looked so bad that a 100 year old crush on him would have been suddenly turned cold. It was the worst.

Despite this, Conrad was really happy to be wearing the same clothes as his king.

His colleague and old friend (male), who wanted to make sure that his name wouldn't be revealed, confided that "he's that kind of guy". He was ruthless.

The most important part of training is jogging, and therefore, Majesty Yuuri and Conrad were running around the castle, eventually reaching the wide garden.

The Blood Pledge Castle can boast that it's 10 times as big as the Tokyo Dome<sup>[2]</sup>, and it's a pretty long run, just going around it once. By the time they had reached the garden, their bodies had warmed up already and their brains were high on adrenaline. It was easier to run after that.

And it was at that time, that they discovered the problem.

Majesty Yuuri was the first one to notice the strange object floating on the pond, as he was running ahead.

"What's that, that thing? That brown thing."

"What thing?"

Conrad approached his scarred eyebrow to his Majesty's pointing finger.

In the pond surrounded by grass, there was a round thing floating.

"Brown.... with black and yellow stripes... Uwah!"

As he uttered the words describing the item, they slowly realized what it was;

the king shouted surprised as he ran sloppily to the pond.

"Kumahachi, isn't it a kumahachi!?"

"I see, indeed the size is about right."

"Gyaaa! Why is the kumahachi that left yesterday floating here! Or rather ... it's not just floating, it's dea....(d)"

He was so scared he couldn't finish the sentence.

An thing similar to a kumahachi was floating face down in the pond. Its see-through wings, its arms and legs similar to a fluffy teddy bear, looked like a leaf on the water, moving along with the waves, just like in a suspense drama. This was bad.

"It seems it's not dead."

"Thank goodness."

The king, who had his finger in his black hair, in a pose as if he would be screaming "God!", relaxed and lowered his hands to his chest when he heard those words.

When Conrad brought it to the shore, they realized that indeed it was the kumahachi that they had said goodbye to the day before.

Judging by the foam that was coming out of its mouth, it was alive.

"In any case, why is it here.... and why is it only one of them..."

"Maybe as soon as they left, this one got lost."

"I hope the other 11 are all right. Hops!"

The king helped pull the kumahachi out while shouting like an old man.

Even though they look cute on the outside, a kumahachi's body is just like that of a wild bear. On top of that, the body was really heavy because it was wet and two people were needed to pull it up.

"..... Nogi.... suu....."

whispered the kumahachi .

"Pull yourself together, kumahachi Number One<sup>[3]</sup>. No, actually we don't know

if it's Number two or Number three. You're safe now."

As they were picking up the body of the lost kumahachi, maybe because of the racket, the guards approached the area. But at that point only the left paw was still in the water. His Majesty and Conrad seemed to have managed to do it.

"Bwough"

"What happened, your majesty?"

Conrad replied instinctively like this to the weird sound that was heard.

He thought that if the king had farted, no, that if the king would have slipped it would be bad. But the king said: It wasn't me, it wasn't me.

"Bwoughough"

This time Conrad realized it couldn't be Yuuri. The creepy sound couldn't be coming from his majesty. It sounded like a frog breathing after coming out from the bottom of the pond.

"Hey, Conrad, the leg! The foot! Something's coming out of the tip of the kumahachi's nails. AH! AHHH!"

Majesty Yuuri uttered a terrified scream.

And then, good gracious!

As the bubbles broke on the water surface, a mini-kumahachi, that looked like the dying kumahachi surfaced.

A small kumahachi emerged from the nails of the kumahachi.

"What is this!? A tiny kumahachi emerged of the kumahachi's foot... AH!"

But then right before their eyes, a 'grandson' kumahachi split out of the one that had emerged<sup>[4]</sup>.

"It's splitting and multiplying!? They're multiplying really fast."

"Maybe. But... this is.... impossible"

This event was unexpected even for Conrad. He couldn't believe the rarest animal of the century, the kumahachi, had another breeding method other than laying eggs.



And while they were talking about this, another kumahachi split, and finally, a third tiny kumahachi was floating on the water.

It was the birth of the three stooges of the rare animal world; or a 1/6 kumahachi, Eva 00, Eva 01, and Eva 02<sup>[5]</sup>.

They quickly took them out of the water, and the multiplication of kumahachi stopped. This was a very dangerous situation! If they would have left them there, they would have ended up having an ENDLESS KUMAHACHI PARADISE.

"Even so, they're so tiny"

"But... they're still.... really cute!"

Even if not everyone was saying it, they all thought the same thing.

The original kumahachi was really cute, but its huge size was a bit scary. However this was an improvement, the miniaturization of the kumahachis was a big hit. Now they had the perfect size to fit between a child's arm in a hug.

All the guards were knocked out by its superb cute and cuddly appearance. Everyone, with wet eyes, and their fist in their mouths yelled 'kawaii'!

As if they were replying to their excited call, the wet mini-kumahachis stood up. The three lined up, raised their arm and waved hello.

"Nogisu!"

"Nogisu!"

"Orandaka-!<sup>[6]</sup>"

It's perfect. They even learned their call.

However, despite the happy commotion around them, suddenly the mini kumahachis got a stern face. They all turn right at the same time. It seemed like they smelled something dangerous.

"Since there aren't any bad bears here, you don't have to worry about the namahage monsters<sup>[7]</sup>"

The person who appeared was Shin Makoku's legendary hunter "Poison Lady Anissina", who other huntsmen called "Aniki" even though she's a woman, the charismatic Matagi.

Lady von Karbelnikoff Anissina.

Not only the mini-kumahachi, but even the guards started trembling. The Anissina effect was absolute and had taken over. By the way, Matagi actually refers to a group of hunters<sup>[8]</sup>. It's not a particular nickname of Poison lady.

"I heard that a bear had appeared and when I came out looking for it.... but look at this! It's only a harmless kumahachi. And these look like the mass-production type. You can't even fight them."

"F-fight? Anissina-san, you also fight bears?"

"Yes, of course"

The Red Matagi, relaxed, and took off her goggles.

"To live is to fight. For the bears and for me. A friend of mine, despite not being able to see, fought a bear and threw it against the floor. It's a grip called "Grab and throw"<sup>[9]</sup>."

"Hyaa, even if your opponent is a wild beast, you fight them hand to hand?"

"That's right, one's body is the best and ultimate weapon we have. The bear who was her opponent left crawling and confused, but at that time if she had finished him, she would now be known as a "Bear killer"."

Conrad, with a happy/sad expression on his face, looked up at the sky. Maybe something happened to him in the past, however in this world you rip what you sow. And that's no one's business.

With her goggles still on her head, she started looking at the nervous mini-kumahachi.

"Ah, they multiplied, huh?"

"Say, Anissina, do you know a lot about the kumahachi's nature?"

"Of course! Who do you think I am? Don't compare me to the other hunters who don't even try to study their enemies."

"When talking about the kumahachi's nature one could say that, first, when they receive the full-moon light, they change into "tsukino wa kumahachi"<sup>[10]</sup>"

"T-that one... is it wilder than the 'normal type' ?

"No, you can only see a moon shaped pattern under its neck. You can say that it's only a minor change."

The legendary Red Matagi touched a very cautious mini-kumahachi with her finger.

"If you soak them in water, they multiply"

"So it's like a wakame (algae) or a gremlin."

"Ah! The one from the Red Square"

Conrad made a dumb comment that no one listened to, and the king neglected to follow the joke. It seems that lately Majesty Yuuri has learned to let his puns slide.

The tiny kumahachis perceived Anissina as an enemy and held onto his Majesty's legs.

While the soldiers held their breath looking at the confrontation between the Red Matagi and the rare animals, a sigh escaped their mouths.

The scene was that lovely.

But don't be fooled by that. This is only a strategy to have the enemy pity them and believe that "They're so cute, I have to protect them". So of course his Majesty, who likes saving people more than he likes the three meals of the day, fell for such strategy.

"Oh, hey, everything's okay. Anissina-san has another plan up her sleeve."

His Majesty didn't know this yet, but Anissina is always ready for war.

"In other words, these three children were born from the kumahachi that fell in the pond."

"Nogisu, Nogisunogisu!"

"You're right, their cry are exactly like the original's...."

"Well, you went ahead and got some buns in the oven unexpectedly, ne?[\[11\]](#)"

While saying that, Conrad grabbed one by the neck, and separated him from the king, since he only had two legs for the three kids.



Anissina continued:

"However, your Majesty, these tiny kumahachis are copies. Even if you can multiply them by immersing them in water, you can't make them reproduce biologically or make them lay eggs, in order to increase the number of original kumahachis. These children are very different from the animals in the world that you come from."

"Ah, they're clones."

"I see, they're clons, ne."

"Yeah, that's right. The children of the originals are exactly like their parents, but this is not the case with these kids. Because if these animals could reproduce so easily they would not be an endangered species."

"I see... even if they are copies of a PROTOTYPE, biologically they're very different."

"It's an animal that's really cute, but it doesn't have any use; however they don't do any harm either."

"Nogisumo, nogisumonogisumo (I'm going to crush you one day<sup>[12]</sup>)"

The three animals were opposed Anissina's words harshly.

"That's not true."

Said his Majesty, while holding one of the mini kumahachis that was still wet and hugging him tightly.

"I think that it would be a very popular animal to keep people company and help them heal...."

Before Anissina and Conrad could stop it, the surprised mini-kumahachi, made itself into a ball and when his majesty thought that the kumahachi was cuddling against him, it stuck its tail out of its butt. No, rather than a tail it was a honeybee stinger.

"..... Ah!"

Pinch.

Majesty Yuuri's painful scream, echoed across the Blood Pledge Castle's

garden.



"Maybe this is not a story for me."

In the corner of a tavern that was starting to get crowded, sitting in an isolated table that's as good as a private room, Gurrier Josak closed his book. More than half of the piece of paper he was using as a bookmark was coming out of the book. The book that he was reading to accompany his liquor was too boring for his liking. A quarreling coming from behind his back reached his ears. He purposely didn't pay attention to it, and picked up his glass to take a sip when a customer approached him.

"Young lady, would you mind if I sit by your side?"

"Oh, my. I'm not even wearing my makeup and you're treating me like a girl? You're so nice."

"However you can see some morning stubble growing."

Regardless of his words, their wide smiles were not the type that you'd see in the mornings.

Lord Weller Conrad was wearing civilian clothes. Josak still wasn't used to seeing him wearing clothes like that. And although Josak himself felt uncomfortable wearing a uniform, seeing Conrad in those clothes felt strange to him. They had probably spent too much time together as fellow soldiers. He sometimes thinks about that when he drinks, and he was also thinking about that at that time, while his friend sat down on the chair that was still warm from the previous customer.

"His Excellency was here up til a moment ago"

"I know. I saw him leave this place. He was in a bad mood, did you make him angry?"

"I don't do that! He always looks like that."

Except for when he's surrounded by kittens. Although Gwendal was in a place like that he was still talking about work. Josak's boss wasn't going to relax his

facial expression there. Conrad lifted the long glass from the table, took a sip, and approached his eyebrow to it.

".... So he's the type of person to drink this kind of sweet drink?"

"Even though he's your brother!"

Josak let out a big laugh.

"Do you only know a lot about his Majesty?"

After making a barely perceptible gesture, he looked at the small object near Josak's hand. It was a book about the size of his palm. It wasn't a luxurious, difficult book that one would keep in a library, but a simple, cheap one for the average citizen to read.

On the red cover you could see a black doll blowing in the wind, the title was written in white letters that caught your eye.

"The Legend of the Red Matagi. Bears across the world."

The author was, of course, Lady von Karbelnikoff Anissina.

"Is it the one about the Kumahachi Incident?"

"That's right."

"Amazing ! And it only happened 10 days ago. How long does it take her to write a book?"

"I promised not to ask her, but you can't find it in libraries yet."

He extended his hand and waved some rough papers before Josak's face, while asking him if he always bought her books.

"Me? Yes, I'm an avid reader."

"I thought so."

"What's with you? Are you from the anti-Poison Lady group?"

"Not really."

"Do you want me to lend my book to you when I finish it? I have the pocket version too."

"Pocket version? Why would you have that?"



"I leave copies whenever I stay at an inn. I want Poison Lady to be known everywhere. Oh, hey, hey stop there!"

Conrad who was flipping through the pages, stopped .

"One of the cases that was published was that of Julia, the bear assassin. Except that the name was changed."

"Hey"

Conrad protested with a poker face.

Then with his mouth and cheeks relaxed, he smiled.

"Although I'm trying to protect her honor, she didn't kill it."

"But here it says that she did though."

"Really?"

While asking the waitress for another drink, he opened the book right about the middle. It was a little before the nostalgic anecdote he hadn't heard in a long time. He looked quickly at it thinking 'Was this the part he was just protesting about? ' and lamented in an exaggerated manner.

"How mean! She's being treated like a rare animal. If this part is treating her like that, I don't want to think what they'll say in the part where Julia throws the bear over her shoulder."

"Yeah, it's written like that."

Josak replied with a trembling voice.

"You can talk about her while smiling now."

His friend was quiet. But after blinking a few times, he replied vaguely, using a tone that couldn't let you know whether he agreed or not. That's why without asking anything else, Josak changed the subject, and took the book back from Conrad's hands.

"Even so, Anissina-chan's ability to learn languages is amazing. She can easily pronounce and use the words of another world."

"I'll give her your praises."

"That's fine, I'll tell her myself."

He goes back to the bookmark that was drenched in alcohol, and went back to the part where his majesty hugged the kumahachi and got stung by it.

"But you know, I'm pretty sure that there can't be an animal that multiplies itself when it gets wet. As expected from Anissina-chan, she can think of really amazing things. She's the best fantasy novel writer in Shin Makoku."

"However, it really does exist. That's what so wonderful about this world."

"No way! Even I, who have traveled across the entire country, have never encounter such a rare animal. Even if I say that I travel across the country, it doesn't mean I'm on a leisure trip. It's because your older brother sends me to so many places you wouldn't believe."

"If you don't like it, you can submit a request to change jobs."

"But I don't want to do that, and that's yet one more thing that's strange. The wonders of this world are countless, right? ... Is it true that his Majesty got stung?"

"Yes"

A different waitress came and place another glass before them.

Conrad said thanks as he smiled to the girl looking down, and she blushed all the way to her ears.

In a way, the girl serving sake seemed to have been stung by a stinger too.

"Strange things happen, even when you are around."

"I didn't think that cute animal ... would have a stinger."

"Hey, hey commander. Don't tell me that you're starting to resemble to his Excellency even in that way? Is your soul drawn to cute things too?"

"Josak."

Conrad put his hands together as he closed his eyes lightly, he sighed and reluctantly confessed.

"That was really my mistake, I lowered my guard. We run every morning within the castle's ground, and at that time all the guards were there. If I had been

working for Gwen, this mistake wouldn't have been fixed with a simple decrease in my salary."

"Well, don't torture yourself over it. Even his Excellency has mercy. I have been in the capital for about 10 days, but I haven't heard the rumors that something had happened to the young master, even though I saw him only 3 days ago."

"Fortunately, the creature didn't possess a dangerous poison. That's why Anissina, who loves poisons so much, is not interested in it. The wound only got a little swollen and then he had a fever for one night. If they would have called Gisela, she would have healed him right away...."

Josak was a little surprised. Conrad, who is really attached to the young king, spoke like a doting parent.

"He said bravely that he was training to enhance his natural healing powers in case an emergency occurs..."

"Ah, so that's what that was about."

The ice in the amber colored liquor made a 'karan' sound in the glass.

"Besides, his majesty was quite shocked that such a cute creature would have stung him and then he got depressed."

"I see. Although one would expect an attack from an enormous man-eating bear, one wouldn't expect that a tiny little cute thing like that would attack you too. Maybe he felt betrayed."

That's just like the young master, who's so kind.

Even if it was obvious he would be depressed after getting stung, he's really blaming himself because he's probably thinking "I must have scared the tiny guy, because I hugged him all of a sudden". Good grief, this tiny creature can even depress the king. Regardless of how cute it is, they still have to acknowledge that it is dangerous. And that's what Josak thought. But then he realized that the rumors about kumahachi Number One and the three tiny ones, had not reached the streets.

The story about the group of kumahachi, who had been born at the Blood Pledge Castle, having left Shin Makoku had already spread. There was even an



article about it in the newspaper. But they didn't know anything about kumahachi Number One falling in the pond, nor about the terrifying fact that kumahachis split and multiply when immersed into water, and so on.

Could it be that it's the first time that the book "The Legend of the Red Matagi. Bears across the world" is being published?

"So tell me, what did the people at the Blood Pledge Castle do with the mini kumahachi?"

Conrad, with an exaggerated gesture, pointed at the book and asked him to keep reading.



When it comes to wild animals, you should try to return them to their original environment. So when it came to the strayed kumahachi, Number One, they had to try and return it to its flock as soon as possible.

"But even if you say that...."

Majesty Yuuri couldn't hide his worried face as he sat in the coachman's seat of the carriage guided by two horses.

"If we don't know the route through which the kumahachis will pass, we can't possibly know where to go, right?"

Anissina couldn't tell them where the flock of kumahachi was going, or what lands they would visit. The Red Matagi likes to research a lot, but she's only interested in enemies stronger than her. And because of this, they still didn't know where the kumahachis were headed.

"Even if we don't know where they'll go, the paints made with their feces are made in Doubos. At the very least, we know that they'll pass through that city."

Conrad who was on a horse next to them, interrupted his words for a moment.

"They'll probably take a toilet break."

"Toilet break, so you mean... shi... excreting? Ah, right, Number One! Do you need to go to the toilet? If you need to go you have to let us know."

"Nogisuu~"

A barely hearable answer to his Majesty's question came from inside the covered part of the carriage. Since its wings and fur had absorbed a lot of water it still couldn't fly. On the other hand, the three mini-kumahachis were flying above the heads of his Majesty and the person sitting by his side, Lord von Bielefeld Wolfram. Since the mini-kumahachis were smaller, they dried up faster.

"Right, right, we need to name you three too."

"Well, in that case, I've already thought of some names: Junoubikurukan , Richimichitoriropi, and Kapo."(Wolfram)

"What's that!? Even though they're triplets, their names are not similar at all. It should be like this, like this. I mean since they're three , then they could be FIRST, SECOND, THIRD, or RIGHT, LEFT AND CENTER, you know?

"Are you sure? Such unserious names?"

"They are all important POSITIONS, don't say they're unserious"

When his Majesty and Wolfram started quarreling, the strings of the bear-ear hats tensed up. By the way, they're MADE IN GWENDAL.

"At any rate, why did you come with us? If we all leave at the same time, Günter will realize we left right away. And here I thought that you could cover up for us while we were away."

"Since I'm one of the parents of the kumahachis, it's obvious I was coming with you too"

By the way, these two are known as the Father and Mother of Shinmakoku's kumahachis, although it is unknown which one is the father and which one the mother. However, the only ones who are interested in finding that out, are the two of them. The twelve kumahachis define them as parent (black) and parent (gold).

"Well, maybe that's true but I'm the one who found kumachichi Number One floating in the pond, and that's probably why Number One relies on me."

"Why are you deciding that? Let's ask Number One himself who he relies on."

"Fine, let's ask him. Say, Number One, you like me better right? You like the

name I gave you, right? It's really cool, right?"

Even though they aren't getting a divorce, and aren't even married yet, they're already fighting over who will get custody of the kids.

"You shouldn't do that , your ma... Yuuri. Even though it's really big, that kid there is only 4 days old. It's not nice to ask him who he likes best."

"Okay, then Conrad should decide the names, since he's impartial. You're good at giving names, right?"

His Majesty seems to be confused. After all, a long time ago, he was the man who named the dog of a female friend, "Turtle". Conrad thought it was probably a bad idea to let him name someone. However, not wanting to betray his majesty's trust, he replied, even though he knew he couldn't do a good job.

"Ah, all right then... June, Chousak, and Minami Haruo<sup>[13]</sup>."

". . ."

Yuuri thought "crap", it would have been better if he had called them "the three stooges" or the "three cactus brothers", but it was too late. He pretended he didn't hear him.

"All right! So RIGHT, LEFT and CENTER it is."

"Are you sure about those simple names? I mean Junoubikurukan, Richimichitoritopi, and Kapo are better."

"The last is different (from the others). No, well, the first two also sound strange (/different).

"What's strange about MottoRichitoritopi ?"

"The name seems to keep changing more and more, Wolfram."

It was about to be a whole day since they crossed the country's borders. They were in a human country already. The trip was very long, and normally it would be very dangerous for Shin Makoku citizens and even more so for the Maou, to travel into human territory without a military escort.

The three of them could continue their trip peacefully because there was a treaty between the mazoku and this neighboring country. So even if the people

there find out that someone's a mazoku, the worst thing that can happen is that people will throw stones or rotten eggs at you, and nothing worse.

Since Majesty Yuuri told Conrad that he didn't want people throwing rotten eggs at him, in order to hide his jet black hair, he's wearing a kumahachi hat which is weak against attacks, but good for hiding his hair. Indeed, even eggs can be dangerous some times. Sometimes they contain the salmonella virus, and sometimes an egg looks like an ostrich egg, but it's really a odd DANPU-chan<sup>[14]</sup>.

"What part of the Doubos city are we heading to? You said it wasn't too far away."

"If the map is correct, we're very close. Look, shouldn't it be those houses over there?"

Conrad was pointing towards a small town lying on the side of a hill. Rather than a city, it looked more like a small town. The houses were made of mud-colored bricks, and there were black caves here and there on the hill that looked like tunnels.

"That place looks like a church, right?"

"It gives off an ominous vibe"

"There are many private faiths and ..... ah!"

While Wolfram was explaining to Yuuri about churches as if he knew what he was talking about, a loud 'goron' sound was heard, and at that time the carriage they were travelling on started shaking.

They turned around quickly, and noticed that kumahachi Number One who was with the luggage had fallen off the carriage. Or actually, he probably just got off all by himself. Number One stood up right away and started running on the grass. They didn't have time to stop him. He could run faster than it looked. Well, this creature is a bear after all, so he must be pretty good at moving around on the ground as well. It kept running towards the town of Doubos which they were approaching.

"What's wrong Number One?"

"Let me handle this, Yuuri."

Wolfram took the reins from Yuuri's hands and made the horses ran at full speed. And even so, it was difficult to catch the kumahachi ahead of them. Conrad reached him riding his own horse, but it was still difficult to approach the enormous running body as it was leaving a cloud of dust, stones and grass behind it. Only the three mini kumahachis were able to reach it first, so they started singing 'nogisu nogisu' trying to calm Number One down. Even though they were singing, Number One did not hear them, and the most hot-tempered of the three kids, started shaking its belly making a 'moji moji' sound.

"Oh, no, this is bad."

They suddenly noticed, a shiny stinger coming out of its butt.

"RIGHT! Don't sting him, RIGHT! Or actually, maybe you're LEFT or CENTER, in any case, you mustn't sting him!"

His majesty's words must have reached his mini-brain, because RIGHT (or maybe it was LEFT or CENTER) looked his majesty's way many times, hiding and showing its stinger skillfully.

While it was still hesitant as to what to do, kumahachi Number One kept running. He ran through the main street of the city, and went all the way into one of the holes in the hill. The townspeople looked through their windows trying to find the source of all the ruckus.

In front of all the people looking at them, Number One started rubbing its butt against the stone entrance of one of the caves. And when he saw the kumahachi doing this ....

"Uwah, Number One! You're taking a shi.... in front of someone's house, no, I mean, defecating in front of someone's house, how can you do that!? H-H-H-How could you!? That's why I told you we needed to potty train him!... PU!"

The sound effects that followed were so cute, that characters cannot represent it well enough.

What an embarrassing and troubling situation. On top of that the kumahachi's (enormous) poop was really smelly, and his majesty covered his nose with watery eyes looking as if he was going crazy. It seems the smell reached all the way to his eyes.



"What's that!? Is he pooping!?"

Wolfram had clothespin on his nose, so he wasn't hit by the smell, but being a well-bred, noble young master, the graphic scene seemed to have disturbed him quite a bit.

The only one who wasn't upset in any way was Conrad.

"Well, it's something that animals do."

Sure enough it's something that happens and he, who's used to long trips, must be used to pooping in places other than a toilet.

"No, I don't do that myself though."

You don't need to excuse yourself.

"I said I didn't do it"

"I'm no' askin' you anythin', Conrad."(t/n: covering his nose)

All three of them were thinking how to apologize, but more importantly about how to pick up the animal's poop. After all, it's an owner's duty to do so. Yet, what came out of the body of an animal similar to a brown bear.... how could they pick that up? As they were thinking that the carriage was going to be full in a second, kumahachi Number One little by little finished taking out everything that was in its belly and sighed satisfied.

In their group, only that kumahachi had a pleased expression on its face.

The townspeople seemed to have gotten mad due to the smell, and started to gather around them complaining. His majesty, thinking he had to apologize stood up from his seat.

"I don't know whether it's good or bad luck (\*bad luck sound like 'poop'), but this place just happens to be a church."

"God will probably forgive you, but we don't know whether the owner of the church will."

But, before they could go inside the cave where the church was, the people who lived in there came out. A sound was heard, but they couldn't tell whether it was a bird or a human being, as someone appeared at the stone entrance.

"Oh, my, my, my it can't be! This smell, this smell is.....!"

The person who appeared was a middle-aged man, wearing a light purple skirt. He was tall, and butch, but perhaps because he had been bald for a long time, his scalp was the same color as the rest of his body. He only had some hair above his ears.

"Aren't you a kumahachi? Isn't this kumahachi poop, which I haven't seen in 20 years!?"

"Wh-what's up with this guy?"

"He doesn't look angry."

Instead, the middle-aged man who seemed to be the owner of the church, was incredibly happy and tried to hug the kumahachi and that's when he got KUMA-PUNCHED. He got up right away and put himself in a FIGHTING POSE, so everyone was surprised.

The cleric didn't have any injuries (\*'didn't have any injuries' sounds as 'had no hair'), he was stronger than he looked.

When he finally saw that there were three people there, his face turned red out of embarrassment for being so upset and took his hands to his head.

"Is it you? The ones who entrusted us this kumahachi poop?"

"Well, it's not like we entrusted anything to you. We should be apologizing here because we let him take a shi.... in front of your door."

The man who seemed to be very polite lowered his head to his majesty, which took him aback. The other person didn't seem to be bothered by this at all.

"No, this is help from Heaven, a god-sent gift. Oh God, I can feel closer to you right now! These people here are your heavenly messengers aren't they?"

"No, wait you're wrong..."

This is not a situation where he could say he was the maou.

At any rate, it seems that the cleric wasn't angry, so that was great. Majesty Yuuri felt relieved. Now, all that was left was figuring out how they were going to get rid of the ten buckets large pile of greenish-yellowish substance.

"You want to get rid of it!? No way!"

Meanwhile, the cleric who seemed to be a nice person, heard what they were talking and was astounded.

"We want to keep this poop. And if you say this is yours, I'll buy it for the town. How much? How much will you charge us? Even if I say this, and despite being the church's owner, I don't have a lot of money. But I would sell all my furniture, and if that's not enough, I could cut my limbs and give them to you, just so that you'll leave the kumahachi poop here. What part? What limb would you like? This arm? This leg? If you want the leg, there's some hair on it, but sadly there's not enough to make a wig out of it."

"Wait a second Church Owner-san. Calm down and listen. You don't need to give us your body in exchange for the shit"

"Ah! Your Majesty! You said shit!"

"You don't need to get so stressed out, if you need the kumahachi poop so badly, we can give it to you. Or actually, you'd be helping us if you take it."

"Really? Is it okay? Oh, thank you so much! Thank you! With this we'll be able to re-draw the church's mural, and express our gratitude to god. Well, since this has been settled we have to hurry. Let's ask old man PALETTO to make the mix."

Right. At that moment it was still just a greenish-yellowish substance, but kumahachi poop is an important ingredient to make paint. Since they can make very nice colors with it, it's very popular. It's said that a lot of famous artists use it too, but they still haven't been able to fix the problem with the smell.

Perseverance is also part of art.

The cleric wanted to repaint the mural of the church using the pigments in the kumahachi poop.

"In this town, to show our gratitude to god, we repaint the mural on the stone board in this church every 20 years. Although I call it a stone board, we're not talking about the type of boards on which children paint, but a polished stone that's a lot larger than that. And we need the dark brown colors that can only be created with natural elements to paint it. Despite this, we've run out of paint. Yesterday, after a long time, a flock of kumahachis flew over our city, but they

did not stop here, they simply passed by."

"Ah, I thought they would pass by this town"

"Yes! But we were only overjoyed for a moment, only a little bit of piss fell, but no poop at all. They didn't even rest here."

The cleric crouched as he told his story.

"At that moment, even I wondered why god would do this to us. But now, it's completely different. God has sent us the poop of this new kumahachi. Ah, I'm so happy. So relieved."

The ones who also felt relieve was the group of people taking care of the kumahachi. His Majesty and Wolfram patted the head of the kumahachi that had gotten lost.

"This is great Number One, we seem to be on the right track."

"Nogi, nogisu"

Whether he did or did not understand what his majesty was saying, Number One lifted the lower part of his body which was now lighter and started to smell the trees around the town restlessly. It seemed as if he was searching for the smell of his friends who were not around.

"What is it Number One? Do you need to go number one now?"

Beware! Kumahachi piss flies backwards.

The three mini-kumahachis were flying above the head of the kumahachi that was smelling the trees without letting him get out of their sight. Compared to his majesty and the gang who were looking at him from afar, the mini-kumahachis were much closer to him; so much that they seemed to be talking to Number One.

When Conrad saw this, he said the following with a bitter smile.

"It seems that the kids are better at taking care of Number One than us...."

But as he was saying these words, kumahachi Number One, changed the direction he was heading towards all of a sudden. Instead of looking towards the roots of the trees, he stretched his head upwards, looking for his friends' trail. He

stood up on his hind legs, just like a tamed bear would.

"Kumahachi stood up.... Ah!"

At that moment, everyone in the group gasped.

He spread its wings, which were folded on its back, flapped them strongly a few times, and lifted its huge body towards the sky. Its see-through wings reflected the sun's light and sparkled.

For an instant, kumahachi Number One floated above the surface, but it didn't give up. It kept flapping its wings, and slowly started to go higher. When it reached the height of the top of the trees, it looked down at his majesty and friends who were giving him astonished looks.

It let out a cry, as if it did not want to part from their side, flapped its wings strongly moving the air around it, and started to fly towards the place where its friends were headed. They didn't even have time to say "Eh? What? He left?".

"Number One, Kuma-back! (\*come back)"

Not even his majesty's dad joke could stop it.

It couldn't be helped, kids must at some point let go of their parents hands, and go out into the world on their own. In this case, it only happened a little bit faster than usual. Although his majesty was somewhat heartbroken, he understood how life works and wasn't upset.

Even so, after so many unexpected situations, he couldn't hide his exhaustion. At that time, the fact that the minis didn't leave with the kumahachi was a relief. The three mini-kumahachi flew around his majesty's shoulder and head, looking up to the sky where Number One disappeared.

"Are you guys going in a different direction?"

"Nogi, nogisu"

Only experts know this, but mini-kumahachis that originated from kumahachis, can't fly very high. That's why they can't fly long distances like migrating animals.

In the middle of the quiet group, the cleric began to talk.

"It left, huh?"



"Ah, yeah, it seems so."

Replied his majesty with a sad tone in his voice.

"We made this trip to return the kumahachi to the wild, but it ended too fast."

"Oh! A trip with such a noble mission!"

The cleric opened his arms.

"However for us, the people from Doubos, your journey became the most important thing in the world. After all, we are now able to produce this really special product, that we hadn't been able to produce in a long time. What do you think everyone? Why don't you rest here before you go back? After all it was fate that brought you here to this town."

Even if they rested, the distance separating them from Shin Makoku wasn't that much. They could return on the same day. And because of that, they would have rather stopped within the country, since it was safer. However the cleric kept insisting enthusiastically for them to stay.

"As a way to thank you for giving us the kumahachi poop which is such a sought after material, let me show you the current mural. It's a good day to show you this, since at the end of this day it will most likely be erased."

Persuaded by the words of the cleric the group started to slowly enter the cave. People are weak against the phrase "today is the last day".

The inside of the cave, which is also the place of worship of that town, was bright enough to see inside, because there were mirrors cleverly put on the sides of the cave, reflecting the light all the way in. Right in the middle there was a plate two times as big as a person, no, actually it was a stone that was in that place, with its sides broken, and its surface polished. On it there was a wonderfully drawn illustration, just as the cleric had described.

And as described, it was drawn with a bright brown material, that can only be created with natural elements.

It was the picture of a maiden.

The maiden was raising her right fist towards the sky, a white thin smoke was coming out of it, and there was a white winged horse following the trail of

smoke. Even to the eyes of an amateur, it was a very powerful and creative picture.

A plate was fixed to the lower right corner of the stone board with the title written in small prints. His majesty bent over to read the letters of the human territory.

"The praying maiden".... It sounds like the name of a new type of strawberry, EH!? She's praying? I thought she was super angry shaking her fist to the skies."

"You know nothing about art. Isn't it obvious that this landscape shows a praying maiden lifting her prayers in her fist up to the sky, opening a path, and through that path a pegasus comes out flying."

"No, this is not a pegasus, it's an Umahachi"(\*Horse-bee; like Bearbee but with a horse)

Umahachi.

His majesty and Wolfram were both quite puzzled when hearing the name of this unknown animal.

"Umahachi is a fantasy animal. On earth it would be something like a qilin or a paku."

Conrad, looking like he knew what he was talking about, was explaining this, but his majesty and Wolfram were not convinced.

"I don't get it, this Umahachi. I mean, you can't let your guard down, because both the qilin and paku exist in real life."

"That's right Yuuri, you can't let your guard down. Maybe the Umahachi also has a stinger in its butt."

"You can't easily find Umahachis. Even the person who drew this, has never encountered one"

Even if the cleric, who seemed to know a lot about the painting said so, Wolfram and Yuuri couldn't let their guards down (/believe this). The cleric continued to explain.

"The Umahachi that has been drawn here, is an animal created by the imagination of Lulubenza, the illustrator. Lulubenza is a woman born and raised

in this town. She is an amazingly gifted artist, and her pieces are as good as any of the famous artists found abroad"

"Yeah, looking at these perfect, strong lines even amateurs like me can see that she's a genius."

"Right?"

The cleric said it emphatically in a way that sounded like he was praising himself.

"Lulubenza is definitely a genius. She drew this when she was about 18 years old. It's been 20 years since she drew it, so depending on how well it can be restored, some parts of it might have to be erased. Personally, I think that would be regrettable"

"Yeah, it would. However the person who will paint the stone board next, must be a great artist, right? Maybe, after twenty years, Lulubenza can draw a new mural on it?"

"About that...."

The smile on the cleric who was guiding them around the church, started to overcast after hearing his majesty's words.

"She left town"

"Huh?"

The cleric continued. Judging by the tone he used, it sounded like he was against it.

"Lulubenza had the talent of a genius, great ambition and was very humble. But that humility, ended up causing her to go wandering on a journey all by herself. She was a woman with a strong ambition, who got married, and once she had a family it looked like she was settled. But one day she brought her cute little daughter here, a child so young who barely understood what was going on, and left me in charge of her. Without giving any explanations, she up and left. That's right, just like the kumahachi did just now."

"She abandoned her little child? Isn't that a little irresponsible for a mother? No, actually it's very irresponsible of her."

"But at least she left her daughter to someone who could replace her right?"

"Well, since she left the child in a good place where she could be raised, there was nothing to be done, if she really wanting to go on her training trip, she had to go."

Unlike his majesty who looked outraged, Wolfram and Conrad showed a degree of understanding.

"I thought the same. That's why when her daughter Nerune, turned ten, I explained it to her like that. I told her that her mother was an artist, and that's why no one could stop her from leaving. However since she was a child, she didn't accept that explanation."

The cleric must have been thinking about something, and took out a few small stone tablets from behind the preaching pedestal. He showed those tablets to the guests, as he looked adoringly to each of them. Despite being poorly drawn, they look very lively.

"Please look at this. These are the sketches that Lulubenza's daughter, Nerune, drew before she turned ten. She had inherited her mother's artistic talent, but when she heard the reason why her mother left, she broke the stones that she used to practice, and never drew again."

In all the pictures, you could see she had as much talent as her mother. No, actually if she was that skilled at the age of ten, after a few more years she could probably surpass her mother.

"This year the child will be turning thirteen, and I thought that I could ask her to draw the mural, to take in her mother's place but.... it can't be helped. Now, we can only ask for an artist from another town nearby to paint it."

"What a shame, since you already have a talented artist in town"

The cleric laughed without strength and shrugged his shoulders.

"The child thinks that her mother has abandoned her. That she doesn't love her. She thinks that she chose her paintings before her family. Thinking like that, it's understandable that she doesn't want to draw again. You can't force her. But...."

When he lifted the curtain covering the stone board, he gestured so everyone would come closer.

"That's impossible! It's impossible to think that Lulubenza doesn't love Nerune. If you look at this, you'll realize right away how much she loved her daughter."

His majesty and the rest were invited to look the backside of the large stone board. Oh, it was incredible! There was something amazing hiding on the back of the stone.

".... There's a really artistic yonkoma<sup>[15]</sup> manga here"

In the first picture, a man and a woman were looking at each other. In the second one, a man and a woman were holding hands. In the third one, a man and a woman lied on a bed. In the fourth one, a mother held a child making a GATSUPOSE<sup>[16]</sup>.

"But it has no punch line"

Indeed, it had no punch line, instead , the fourth picture showed the love that the mother felt for her child. It was a wonderful piece in which the artist's feelings were plain to see in the traces. It was really a shame that it was hidden on the back side. That's what his majesty said.

"Then, you should really show this to that girl called Nerune, if you do that, you'll solve the problem with one strike."

"No, I can't do that."

The cleric started shaking his head, and then, as if something terrible would happen, he lifted his arms towards the ceiling as if he was rejecting that suggestion.

"This work by Lulubenza can't be seen by people younger than 14."

"Eh? What part of this painting is R-14?"

His majesty looked at the pictures again, thinking he might have missed something, but he couldn't find any sensual or violent parts.

" The reason is that.... you can see a man's nipples in them."

"Ah, a man's nipple, I see.... but, wait! That's it? That's what you're looking at?"



I was looking at the woman's ... and I thought the R-14 part was the part with the naked woman. In a guy, who cares? It doesn't really matter if his torso is naked.

"But a woman's body is a heavenly thing, something made to give birth and feed children.... but a man's nipple...."

The cleric squirmed.

"It has no purpose! There really is no reason for a man to have nipples, right?"

"Right, but even if a child sees something like that it's not like it could harm them in any way"

"But that's my..... , actually, that's me."

The cleric covered his face with both hands, which turned completely red, as he crouched in embarrassment. He was very embarrassed as he explained that a father should never show his naked torso to his daughter who is still a child. In that moment, everyone realized for the first time, that the cleric was Nerune's father.

"Goodness! If we were to have this kind of perception of sexuality in Shin Makoku, I wouldn't be able to go to the mixed hot springs with Greta."

"Then, how about if both you and the child wear the same type of bathing suit?"

"What!? Father and daughter wearing the same type of bathing suit! That'd be the worst!"

"Now, now, young master, the standards of obscenity varies according to the country."

Leaving the still shy cleric behind, the three of them left the cave; hearing the batting of the mini-kumahachi wings louder and louder as they came out. They seem to be ecstatic, flying about the head of a girl sitting on the grass. If the children were to sting the girl it would be pretty bad, so his majesty tried to stop the minis when he realized the following. Before he could go after the minis, the girl around which they were flying, who looked about twelve, had something in her mouth that looked like a cigarette. At the sight of a minor who was a

delinquent and thinking about how delinquents seem to keep getting younger and younger, His Majesty Yuuri, couldn't stay silent.

"Hey, you! That girl over there! I don't know if you're a delinquent or just pretending to be, but do you really think a child should be smoking?"

"Yuuri, that's a bread crust."

"What? Bread crust? I'm sorry, I didn't know. But she's walking around with the bread crust in her mouth, it's misleading."

The mini-kumahachis stopped flying as soon as the girl opened her mouth to talk. They seemed to be scared.

"I thought I smelled paint.... and indeed, there were kumahachis here."

"Yeah. Although, the original kumahachi has already flown away, going after its flock. You want some paint? Then you should go to the house of old man Paletto. We were told that they were making the mix there.... ah! Could it be that you ...?"

Since his Majesty spoke louder than the girl, the minis hid behind him to act big on borrowed authority. The whole ass in the lions skin thing.

"Are you Nerune? Lulubenza's daughter?"

"So, wha' if I'mma(atai<sup>[17]</sup>) her? Wha' about tha'?"

His majesty flinched in surprised after hearing such a phrase coming out of the mouth of a girl of such innocent age (although I think perhaps she's a bit old to be called innocent), "Wah~, this is the first time I hear someone call themselves "atai", since Sukeban Kyouko" said his majesty<sup>[18]</sup>.

"Who's this Kyouko!? Is it a woman!?"

Detective Sukeban is a woman, but I think Sukeban Kyouko is a man<sup>[19]</sup>.

"Anyway...."

His majesty let the tsukkomi pass in an elegant fashion, and cleared his throat. Preaching Mode activated.

"Nerune-san... chan? Your father is very sad. Even if you stopped drawing; your father, you know? he wants you to paint the big mural in the church, following

the footsteps of Lulubenza. I thought the same, when I saw your sketches....

"To paint?! Paint, you said!?"

Her tone was very powerful for a 12, 13 year old. She looked at everyone from behind her light brown bangs, and not only the mini-kumahachis but even his majesty was taken aback. If there was a history record in this town, her name would be under the phrase "People who don't care about life".

"Why do Imma haveta paint?"

"But... you have the skill to it"

"Imma was abandoned because of paintings! My motha' loved painting more than she loved me!"

"You're wrong, if you saw the yonkoma...."

But then, his majesty remembered that the yonkoma was R-14 and he stopped talking. If she could see the GATSUPOSE that the mother makes as she's holding the baby, the bright smile she gives her daughter, Nerune would also believe that her mother loved her.

Standing on the grass, he talked to Nerune.

"Your mother left on a training trip, and I understand that you have mixed feelings but...."

"Understand!? That ya understand mine mixed feelings!?"

"Then ya' were ya' abandoned by yar motha'?"

"Well... no, but..."

"Then I wan ya to shut up, ya know? My motha' abandoned me because she loved painting. If it wasn't for that mural, motha' wouldn've left me, she's still be with me. That mural stole my motha'."

Wanting to reply (but being unable to), his majesty held onto her opening arms strongly. But he couldn't say anything.

"That mural, that mural that stole my motha', why do I have to repaint it!?"

"Well that's...."

"How could ya understand how Imma feeling? How could someone who wasn't abandoned by his parents, who was happily raised by them, how could a naive person like ya understand how Imma feeling!?"

The girl's cheeks were bright red, as she struggled to breathe.

"He can't ."

Wolfram, who had been silent till now, tried to step forward, but his majesty stopped him with one arm. It must have been a conditioned reflex, but it was the right call to make. Because when Wolfram is silent he's several times more scary than when his face is all red and angry.

"I'm sorry, I might have not thought my words through and said things I shouldn't have. Yeah, that's right. You were separated from your mother before you could even understand what was happening. I never had such a sad experience, so that's why I probably can't understand your anger."

The girl was listening in silence.

"But Nerune, I think that.... it's a waste when people who have a gift don't use it. I really think it's a waste. Maybe hearing this from someone like me, who's always swinging the bat without hitting, doesn't sound too convincing, but if you have a chance to take the bat and go to the plate, and instead you decide you don't want to leave the bench, then you're also being disrespectful to everyone who didn't get a chance to be on that bench...."

Conrad, who was unable to get into the discussion, thought that Yuuri didn't need to compare everything to baseball. But, no matter how many years go by, that's something Yuuri can't change. Then, his majesty said "I'm sorry for saying things I shouldn't have", and who knows what he might have thought then, but he immediately returned to the cave. Conrad quickly ran after him.

Out there, only Wolfram, who had been stopped by his majesty, Nerune and the three mini-kumahachi remained.

Wolfram didn't even move an inch, he just looked straight at the child and said:

"Hey, little girl"

Since Yuuri stopped him, he's didn't approach her, but his stare alone seem to be able to freeze someone right on their tracks. If Nerune wouldn't have the natural ability that artists have to read the air, she would have fallen right on her ass and broke her hip.

"Wazzap?"

"You called him 'naive' (amachan). What does that mean?"

"Someone who has never suffered, someone who's too optimistic (amatare)"

"Too optimistic (amatare)? Does that mean something like henachoko (rookie)?"

"That's right."

"I see, he's a henachoko (rookie), hmm....? Then let me ask you, if one day you'd suddenly be forced to carry the hopes and fears of millions of people on your back among friends and foes. If that would happen, what would you do?"

Nerune frowned.

"And how woulda Imma know that?"

"Right, huh? A little girl like you, who grew up without having any responsibilities or duties... how could someone like you understand his pain? But even so, you call him too optimistic (amatare). I'm going to let you know now, just how bad your crime is"

Even if he didn't know it conciously, in times like those, Wolfram looked a lot like his oldest brother. Actually, if you ask someone who knows them both, judging by the faint smile on Wolfram's lips as he spoke, one could say he looks even more merciless than his brother.

"If you insult a king, you're dead."

Even Nerune, who knew nothing about the world of grown ups, got scared by these words and started to tremble.

"It seems that you're a minor, so I'll forgive you today, but if you do this again, I'll have no mercy on you. Listen up, and mark my words. The only one who can call Yuuri henachoko, is me -nya... !"(\*surprised shout)



Unfortunately just when he was about to finish his kakkoii (cool) lines, his majesty came back from inside the cave.

"You know, I really don't think there's anything R-14 about that painting."

With enough force that would make the blue vein in his forehead show, his majesty Yuuri told this to Nerune, and held onto her arm strongly. He gave her no time to react, and dragged her all the way into the church. After taking the cleric by surprise, Yuuri went behind the large stone and moved the curtain.

"Look! This is Lulubenza's painting."

When the girl saw for the first time the R-14 picture.... no, I mean, her mother's masterpiece, she's left breathless by its beauty.

"This is Lulubenza's painting, the woman who you said didn't love her daughter"

"This is my ... no, my mother's painting. It's a painting of my mother and me....."

The actual masterpiece was more eloquent than a 1000 words. Even without an explanation, her mother's love could be felt by Nerune. It's as if Lulubenza's love for her daughter was flowing out of the painting as a passionate torrent moving towards Nerune.

"Motha'....."

Nerune used her sleeves to wipe her tears, making sure that the people around her couldn't see her.

"I'll paint. Motha', Imma will try to paint again!"

"Will you paint for us Nerune?"

"Yeah, fatha'. I'll paint, paint, paint, and then paint some more; and Imma become an even greater artist than motha' and when she comes back to town, it'll be my surprise for her."

"Oh! Nerune!"

"Fatha'!"

The cleric and daughter hugged so tightly, that one would not believe this was

the same man who was embarrassed about man nipples just moments ago. Both father and child were wailing. Everyone else around them got caught in the moment and started crying (because the others were crying). I wonder who looked more beautiful?

"I , who even broke part of the stone, for some reason will be painting with the tip of my brush on it. I'll be the second artist to paint this mural; Nerune, the Red...."

When the second artist to paint the mural was about to finish her phrase, the mini-kumahachi started crying. His majesty and the gang hurried up outside and saw.....

"Ah! Even you guys ended up doing it!"

The three mini kumahachi were clumsily in line, with a strangely satisfied face. Even their faces were just like that of the original kumahachi. But there was one thing that was completely different from the original one.

The feces that the minis excreted, unlike the kumahachi's greenish-yellowish one, had a reddish, copper-like color.

"Their looks and cry is exactly the same, but the color of their poop is completely different. It's just like Anissina-san said, the PROTOTYPE, and these ones here are completely different creatures."

Kneeling before the animal feces, his majesty was completely in awe.

"Uhm... I have something to ask you"

Said the cleric, approaching the group with his mind made up.

"Please give me your child."

"EEEEEEHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!?"

In that instant, his majesty Yuuri and Wolfram experience a terrible shock that they had never felt before in their lives.

It was a shock similar to the one a person would experience if the child they raised lovingly, would bring home some middle-aged, bald man older than them and she were to tell them that they wanted to marry him.

"W-w-w-w-w-hat, you!? How old do you think Greta is!? ..... Think about the age difference~!"

"Wait, wait, wait Yuuri! The age difference is not the problem, it's not a problem! Rather than that, the problem is that she is still a child! For a man like this to propose to her would be a crime!"

"Yeah, it's a crime! Father will never allow it! Or rather! I don't want you to call me father!"

"No, don't say that, please, don't say that! Could you please leave the little kumahachis in this town under our care?"

"I will not allow.... Ah? Eh? Kumahachis?"

Thinking about it slowly, it was impossible that this man who Yuuri had just met that day, would ask to marry Greta. The cleric, who had the entire town behind him, joint his hands before his chest, as if he were praying to god, and asked his majesty.

"That's right. With this reddish-copper colored poop, we can surely create an amazing red paint. The bright red color used on the stone mural can't be created in any other way. Please, travelers, I beg you, could you please entrust those small kumahachis to this town? We'll care for them as if they were god's messengers"

Which means that in the end, due to the passionate plea of the people of Doubos, the three mini-kumahachi stayed there. Thanks to them, the paint that was a luxurious and scarce item , will be able to be produced in mass and reach the markets..... Maybe there'll be a lot of red, though....

"But you know? It's a shame, don't you think?"

His Majesty said, on the carriage heading for Shin Makoku, reluctant to part from the mini-kumahachis side.

"Actually, I had started to picture those cute, little kumahachi flying around the castle's gardens"

"Yeah..."(Wolf)

"It was sort of a soothing image"

Wolfram and Conrad felt the same way. When the mini-kumahachis were floating above their heads all the time, it was a little annoying, but now that they weren't there anymore, they were a little sad.

"But the little ones are living in a place where they are needed and everyone's thankful to have them."(Yuuri)

"I wonder"(Wolfram)

Wolfram remembered how the little group of mini-kumahachis flew where they pleased as they pleased, and tilted his head.

"If you think about the people from Doubos, the kumahachis don't have anything to do with them. They just feed them and wait for them to poop, to get the pigment for the paint or use it as plant fertilizer, but they don't really care about them, right?"

"That's because they're animals, right?"(Conrad)

His majesty was going to say "No, that's not right!", due to his own personal reasons, but he stopped himself. Because after all, his majesty doesn't really know exactly what kind of living creatures the kumahachis are. He doesn't know enough to speak about them or on their behalf. Besides before talking about this pointlessly, there was something he wanted to know more about.

"By the way, those kids, left behind a big mountain of shi....poop, but we never saw them eat anything. Or rather, what do kumahachi eat? Say Conrad, what do kumahachis eat mainly?"

As soon as he asked that question, Conrad averted his eyes.

"Hey, Conrad? Why are you looking at the sky so unnaturally? Hey, Wolf, you too! What's up with you? Why did you go silent all of a sudden? Why are you looking over there? Did I ask something wrong? Did I ask something I shouldn't have?"



"So this is what happened while you were away."

"While I was working at the other side of the ocean"

Josak said so with a displeased tone, since Conrad, rather than working was actually having fun. He wasn't jealous, but he didn't want Conrad to compare his work to his. He was always working in a field where his life was on the line, and on top of that he got chased after by cute girls, mature women, and sometimes even old guys. He was very busy, working for the country. Good grief! If it was an order received by anyone else, he wouldn't be going to an enemy country. He let out a long sigh. Conrad, whether he knew or not what Josak was thinking asked him:

"So? Where are you heading to for your next mission?"

"Oh, no, commander! If I were to tell you then it wouldn't be a secret mission."

"Then, what direction are you heading towards? Are you going to go through Doubos?"

"What do you want to ask me, Conrad?"

At that time, he took a wicker basket from under his seat. It was big enough for an adult to hold it with both arms. A strange sound came from inside it. The sound of a sharp needle scratching the box.....

"It happened again."

"What!?"

It seems that one of the mini kumahachis, followed the group back to the capital, and Greta who didn't know what had happened was about to get into the ofuro and she took it with her and once again it split in three. They had promised to leave the mini-kumahachi at the church to make the town of Doubos strong again, so now it was too late to keep it in the Blood Pledge Castle as it would be an ethical problem but, you don't really need to hear how the rest of the story continued.

Those three were left at the church, but somehow one of them returned to the Blood Pledge Castle, and someone who didn't know what would happen, soaked it and once again the amount of kumahachis increased. So if they sent these to Doubos again, one would come back to Shin Makoku again, and someone who doesn't know about it, will get it soaked and more mini-kumahachis will appear.

Josak could see it already.

In a future, not far from now, he saw an image of mini-kumahachis fluttering around, covering the skies of Shin Makoku.

Kumahachis are very delicate creatures.

So everyone! When you start living with a kumahachi, you have to promise to be very careful of how you take care of them!

## References[\[edit\]](#)

1. [↑](#) The title is a spoof of another story by Takabayashi-sensei "While I was lost, a flower". In this case, the title can be understood as "When I was lost, a Kumahachi" or "While it was lost, the bear... (became) sm(aller)". But so much of the title is missing to interpret it like that, that I decided to follow the structure of the previous story.
2. [↑](#) Tokyo Dome: 47,000 m<sup>2</sup>
3. [↑](#) Pun: "Shikkari shiro, kumahachi ichiro."
4. [↑](#) So the first one was born from the foot of the big one, and then it split into another kumahachi. (of the same size)
5. [↑](#) Reference to Evangelion and other famous things that come in threes.
6. [↑](#) Literally Orandaka-! I'm guessing one of the kumahachi yelled that, although maybe it was Yuuri and this was a pun. It means "Dutch car". I'm going to guess this is some sort of pun, much like Nogisu means "vernier calliper". I haven't seen Orandaka~ anywhere else.
7. [↑](#) Namahage monster is like a boogie man that visits children for New Year's Day and frightens them.
8. [↑](#) The Matagi are traditional winter hunters of the Tōhoku region of northern Japan, most famously today in the Shirakami-Sanchi forest between Akita and Aomori.

9. [↑](#) A judo move.
10. [↑](#) Some sort of Sailor Moon pun it seems.
11. [↑](#) Yep, this was a pregnancy joke.
12. [↑](#) The phrase between parentheses was such in the original and it explains what the mini kumahachis were actually saying.
13. [↑](#) An Enka singer, but the kanjis mean "3rd", "wave", "spring", "boy" so something like 3rd son from the spring.
14. [↑](#) It's a pun that I couldn't quite get "ダチヨウの卵と見せかけて、半端なダンブちゃんだったりもします。"Unless she's talking about Humpty Dumpty, but I'm just guessing here.
15. [↑ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yonkoma](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yonkoma)
16. [↑](#) GATSUPOSE is known as "success kid pose" in the West.
17. [↑](#) Atai is probably the worst form of "I" that you'll find. It works like this: average->watashi; informal->atashi ; gang-member-> atai . It sounds very rude.
18. [↑](#) A male artist who dressed like a girl and spoke like a delinquent <https://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%A1%9C%E5%A1%9A%E3%82%84%E3%81>
19. [↑](#) Sukeban Kyouko (the character) seems to be spoofing this Detective Sukeban, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukeban\\_Deka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sukeban_Deka)